

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

One of the most unique creatures all over the world is human being, consisting of psychical, psychological, and mental substance. He always faces problems of life. To encounter the kind of problems, human being will compete to escape from the press of painful thing, building his own self to extend the hand for feeling satisfaction in the matter of inner-self and the outer world. All kind of ways are done to get a satisfaction to be alive. Mc Clelland and Winter (in Wexley and Yulk, 1984: 17) state that satisfaction to live in the world can be reached if human being has a power or potential as his self-influence. Henceforth, the writer refers the term potential as one of human's need. Dealing with this case, Ryckman (1985: 396) says that there is a possibility of moving toward self-actualization of one's own unique potentialities.

In doing so, human being requires a need to realize his potential. Maslow defines the need for potential as the need for self-actualization that covers the need to become the kind of person he/she is able to become. "The need for self-actualization is to become everything that one is capable of becoming. People who have everything can maximize their potential" (Maslow in Gwynne, 1997).

Relating to all of those described earlier, the writer uses the sense of *self-actualization* to observe the novel that the major character wants to reach. The novel shows an attempt of Richard (major character) in gaining the purpose of his life. To seek the purpose of his life deeply, at first, it is necessary for the writer to understand a bit of his life's journey.

Richard Wright, a black American short story writer and novelist, was born in Natches, Mississippi on Sept. 4, 1908. Since his childhood, he grew up in poverty, his grandparents were slaves, his mother was schoolteacher and his father was a sharecropper. When Richard was five years old his father left the family. Next his family moved to Memphis, where his mother got a job as a cook. In this new place, Richard joined the school just for a few months because his mother got ill, so that he was forced to leave the school. However, in Mississippi he has a relative that is ready to help him continuing his school. Richard is decided to stay with them. Besides, he continued teaching himself by reading books. While attended the school, Richard has various jobs as a newspaper deliveryman and assistant for insurance agent. In 1925 he graduated from junior high school, Mississippi. Then he returned moving to Memphis during 1925-1927, in this place he worked to an optical company and used his time to read a lot of book widely.

His first story "*The Voodoo of Hell's Acre*" (1924), published by Southern Register – Jackson, has motivated him to be a writer. To reach his purpose as writer, Richard went to Chicago. Richard wrote and worked to the Federal Writer's project as his first career . In 1932, Richard joined the

communist Party and Club of Leftist writers and authors of Chicago. In 1937 he left Chicago and headed for New York worked as Editor Daily Worker, later vice president of the League for American Writers. He released a few novel during 1938 – 1940 such *Uncle Tom's Children* and *Native Son*. For the novel entitled *Black Boy*. It is published in 1945 records his rebellion toward the condition he experienced as an isolated Nigger.

Nevertheless, this novel also tells about young boy Richard who lives in the South where he is restrained as a man and writer. The South is the place which is full of violent, brutality, and depressing images. These conditions cause Richard feel isolated in his own family, blacks and even whites. Then, the destiny has changed him to move to the North, trying to be a fully man and writer. In reaching this expectation he has to struggle against feeling of isolation. He also takes hard efforts to gain his potential and find a freedom from isolation as reflected in his self-actualization achievement.

This research concerns with an effort of the major character to reach self-actualization. Therefore, humanistic psychology of Abraham Maslow that focuses on hierarchy of needs will be used to analyze the novel as an appropriate theory.

B. Problem Statement

The major problem of the study is how the major character's self-actualization is reflected in Richard Wright's *Black Boy*.

C. Literature Review

As literature review of this research the writer finds that a novel entitled *Black Boy* ever been discussed as thesis using two difference approaches. First, is written by Marlina by her title (*Awareness of Being Black – An Individual Approach*). She focuses on the development of individual personality in relation with environment, describing the process of social learning in developing personality (Marlina: 2002).

The second thesis is written by Retno KH (*A Struggle Against Racial Discrimination – A Sociological Approach*). In her research, she explores the young boy Richard survives his life in social reality.

Relating to both approaches and ideas above, the writer takes the other theme using different approach to broaden and understand the novel deeply. For the discussion of *Richard's self-actualization–humanistic psychology*, the writer found it never been discussed before as a thesis.

D. Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. Analyzing the structural elements of the novel *Black Boy*.
2. Analyzing the novel based on Maslow's humanistic psychology.

E. Benefit of the Study

Basically there are two benefits of the study as follow:

1. Theoretically, the writer expects this study is able to contribute an expansion of this research, especially on Richard's self-actualization.

2. Practically, this research as a reference to analyze this literary work both different theme and approach.

F. Research Method

1. Type of Research

This research belongs to qualitative research, which it refers to the research based on qualitative data, which means it doesn't need any statistic and calculation to explore the data.

2. Source of Data

There are two resources that the writer takes, namely:

- a. The primary source is *Black Boy's* Richard Wright.
- b. The secondary source uses such theories of literature and other books that support the analysis.

3. Method of Data Collection

The method of data collection in this study is library research and documentation. The process of writing this thesis uses the procedures as follows:

- a. Reading the novel repeatedly and underlying the important data which consists of sentences, phrases and words.
- b. Exploring the main data of character that will be analyzed.
- c. Identifying a particular part that is important and relevant for the analysis.
- d. Making note both primary and secondary data in cards.

- e. Selecting the data by rejecting the irrelevant matter which do not support the topic of the study.
- f. Classifying the data into some categories.
- g. Arranging, researching and developing the selected materials into a good unity toward the topic of the study.

4. Technique of Data Analysis

The technique of data analysis in this study is descriptive and hermeneutic. Descriptive means that the writer interprets the analysis text and content relating to the psychological condition of the major character; while hermeneutic interprets the text to find out the intention of the author.

G. Research Paper Organization

In order the research is easy to follow, the writer uses the systematic as follow:

Chapter I is the introduction. This chapter involves the background of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, literary review, benefit of the study, theoretical approach, research method, and research paper organization. Chapter II deals with the underlying theory. It covers the notion of humanistic psychology, main principles of Maslow's humanistic psychology, and the theoretical application. Chapter III is structural analysis, which included character and characterization, plot, point of view, setting, theme, and style of Richard Wright's *Black Boy*. Chapter IV deals with humanistic psychology analysis, and chapter V deals with conclusion and suggestion.